DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 218 978 FL 013 090

TITLE	Weaknesses in the Resident Language Training System of Defense Language Institute Affect the Quality of Trained Linguists. Report to the Secretary of the Army.
INSTITUTION	General Accounting Office, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	GAO/FPCD-82-22
PUB DATE	6 May 82
NOTE	46p.
AVAILABLE FROM	U.S. General Accounting Office, Document Handling and Information Services Facility, P.O. Box 6015, Gaithersburg, MD 20760 (First 5 copies are free; additional copies are $3.25 each).
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Techniques; Course Content; *Instructional Improvement; *Intensive Language Courses; *Language Proficiency; *Language Tests; Postsecondary Education; *Program Evaluation; Second Language Instruction; Teaching Methods; Testing
IDENTIFIERS	*Defense Language Institute CA

ABSTRACT

This report is a summary of the review of the Defense Language Institute (DLI) that was made by the General Accounting Office (GAO) at the request of a member of Congress. The objectives of the study were to identify and analyze significant internal DLI problems that diminish the overall effectiveness of the language training provided there. Accordingly, three issues were examined and reported: (1) course development activities, (2) management of classroom instruction, and (3) evaluation of graduates and training. After an introduction that describes the concern of the DLI and the objective, scope and methodology of the study, the report is divided into three sections corresponding to the three issues examined in the study. The investigation recommended that the Institute: (1) replace outdated materials in basic courses, (2) upgrade the management of classroom instruction, and (3) better assess the effectiveness of its training mission. Appendices include information on DLI student enrollment and instructors by language as of September 1981, a review of previous studies of operations and training at DLI, and the Foreign Service Institute's language skill level descriptions. (Author/AMH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED218978

BY THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Report To The Secretary Of The Army

Weaknesses In The Resident Language Training System Of Defense Language Institute Affect The Quality Of Trained Linguists

The Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center, manages the largest foreign-language-training effort in the United States. The vast majority of trained language personnel supports the defense intelligence mission, and such training is considered vital to preserving national security.

Because of a series of problems at the Institute, GAO concludes that changes are necessary to improve the quality of instruction. GAO recommends that the Institute (1) replace outdated basic course materials, (2) upgrade the management of classroom instruction, and (3) better assess the effectiveness of its training mission.

DOD responded that it was taking corrective action and had, in some cases, made improvements in its language training.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

FL013070

GAO/FPCD-82-22
MAY 6, 1982

Request for copies of GAO reports should be sent to:

U.S. General Accounting Office
Document Handling and Information
Services Facility
P.O. Box 6015
Gaithersburg, Md. 20760

Telephone (202) 275-6241

The first five copies of individual reports are free of charge. Additional copies of bound audit reports are $3.25 each. Additional copies of unbound report (i.e., letter reports) and most other publications are $1.00 each. There will be a 25% discount on all orders for 100 or more copies mailed to a single address. Sales orders must be prepaid on a cash, check, or money order basis. Check should be made out to the "Superintendent of Documents".

UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

FEDERAL PERSONNEL AND
COMPENSATION DIVISION

B-205861

The Honorable John O. Marsh, Jr.
The Secretary of the Army

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Attention: The Inspector General
DAIG-AI

Pursuant to a request from Congressman Leon E. Panetta, we examined the management operations of the Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center, at Monterey, California. The report discusses what we believe are the significant internal problems which diminish the overall effectiveness of language training at the Institute.

The report contains recommendations which require specific action on your part. As you know, section 236 of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 requires the head of a Federal agency to submit a written statement on actions taken on our recommendations to the House Committee on Government Operations and the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs not later than 60 days after the date of the report. A written statement must also be sent to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations with the agency's first request for appropriations made more than 60 days after the date of the report.

We are sending copies of this report to the Director, Office of Management and Budget, and to the Chairmen, House Committee on Government Operations, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, House and Senate Select Committees on Intelligence, and House and Senate Committees on Armed Services.

Sincerely yours,

for W. J. McCormick, Jr.
Clifford I. Gould
Director

GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
REPORT TO THE SECRETARY
OF THE ARMY

WEAKNESSES IN THE RESIDENT LANGUAGE TRAINING SYSTEM OF DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE AFFECT THE QUALITY OF TRAINED LINGUISTS

D I G E S T

The Defense Language Institute's Foreign Language Center is responsible for providing foreign language training to military personnel who are being prepared for intelligence activities. The Institute's mission is to conduct and supervise language training for these personnel and to provide technical support for all other foreign language training conducted for the services except for military academies and overseas schools. GAO conducted this review at the request of Congressman Leon E. Panetta. GAO's objectives were to identify and analyze significant internal Defense Language Institute problems that diminish the overall effectiveness of language training at the Institute.

GAO reviewed the management of training at the Institute and concluded that changes are necessary to improve the quality of language instruction. More specifically, the Institute needs to (1) replace outdated materials in basic courses, (2) upgrade the management of classroom instruction, and (3) better assess the effectiveness of its training mission.

EFFORTS TO DEVELOP QUALITY COURSE MATERIALS HAVE BEEN UNPRODUCTIVE

The Institute has made little progress in improving the quality of current course materials. It has expended 159 staff-years at a cost of about $4.2 million but has not produced needed basic course materials. Defense officials said, however, that new course materials would be forthcoming during 1982.

The lack of progress has been caused, in part, by the Institute's failure to (1) effectively set course development priorities, (2) properly

GAO/FPCD-82-22
MAY 6, 1982

Tear Sheet

implement prescribed course development procedures, (3) adequately monitor progress of course development projects, (4) fully explore the potential of using commercial textbooks, and (5) effectively use contracting to obtain needed course materials. (See p. 4.)

CHANGES IN MANAGEMENT OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION SHOULD IMPROVE TRAINING QUALITY

Inadequate management of classroom instruction could be adversely affecting the quality of classroom training. Specifically, GAO found that:

--An officially approved and accepted teaching methodology was lacking.

--Instructor training was limited.

--Instructors were not being properly evaluated by supervisors.

--Response to and followup on training recommendations were poor.

--Technical language assistants had not been effectively used. (See p. 11.)

ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS IS NOT CONCLUSIVE

The Institute cannot conclusively assess the proficiency of its graduates or the effectiveness of its training system on the basis of its existing evaluation processes. It needs to formulate a cohesive policy statement on its training objectives and standards in order to train students to desired user proficiency levels. The lack of clear objectives and standards causes confusion over what to evaluate or what the proficiency level of graduates should be. (See p. 17.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

GAO recommends that the Secretary of the Army direct the Commandant of the Institute to:

--Develop resident basic courses using commercially available materials whenever these

can be adapted at less cost and in less time than in-house development effort.

--Establish controls over course development projects which provide the means to assess progress against specified target dates.

--Develop and distribute a standard schoolwide training methodology for use in all language departments.

--Require all newly hired instructors to complete both phases of the basic instructor-training course. In addition, instructors should be encouraged to seek out additional training to improve their instructional abilities as part of the individual development programs.

--Establish procedures to carry out the reinstated policy for supervisory classroom visits and hold supervisors accountable for routinely observing instructor classroom behavior.

--Establish realistic training objectives based on mission requirement and use the Defense Language Proficiency Test to measure students' performance in satisfaction of these objectives and require that students pass the test as a condition for graduation.

--Develop a Defense Language Proficiency Test that will measure student proficiency of the objectives and standards established by the Institute.

AGENCY COMMENTS

The Department of Defense commented that it shares a common interest with GAO in the effectiveness of training at the Institute and stated that several years ago it observed many of the conditions reported by GAO. Defense officials reported that, since GAO's audit efforts were completed, there has been a high level of accomplishment and that many problems noted in this report either have been or are being addressed.

GAO modified some of the proposed recommendations in its draft report as a result of Defense's comments regarding actions taken or underway.

Tear Sheet

These modifications are addressed in the recommendation and agency comment sections of chapters 2, 3, and 4. (See pages 10, 15, and 21.)

Contents

		Page
DIGEST		i
CHAPTER		
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	Quality of linguists and training has been a longstanding concern	2
	Objective, scope, and methodology	2
2	DLI's COURSE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS HAVE BEEN UNPRODUCTIVE	4
	Failure to effectively set priority on resident basic courses resulted in disproportionate amount of resources spent on nonresident courses	4
	DLI has improperly implemented the instructional systems development approach	6
	DLI has not established adequate controls by which to monitor and manage projects	7
	DLI has not fully explored the potential of using commercial textbooks	8
	DLI has had poor results in contracting for basic course development	9
	Conclusions	9
	Recommendations	9
	Agency comments	10
3	CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION CAN BE BETTER MANAGED AND SUPERVISED	11
	Officially approved and accepted teaching methodology is lacking	11
	Instructor training is limited	12
	Supervisors not properly evaluating instructors	12
	Response to training recommendations has been poor and followup has been ineffective	13
	TLAs have not been used effectively	14
	Conclusions	15
	Recommendations	15
	Agency comments	15

		Page
4	DLI LACKS AN ADEQUATE MECHANISM FOR DETERMINING THE QUALITY OF ITS STUDENTS	17
	DLI does not have a cohesive statement of its training objectives and standards	17
	Current proficiency tests are not relied on as a measure of the effectiveness of DLI's training system	19
	Criterion-referenced tests have been developed slowly--tests should reference TLOs	20
	Conclusions	21
	Recommendations	21
	Agency comments	21
APPENDIX		
I	Letter dated March 19, 1982, from the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering	23
II	DLI student enrollment and instructors by language as of September 11, 1981	31
III	Previous studies of operations and training at DLI	32
IV	FSI's language skill level descriptions	34

ABBREVIATIONS

DLI	Defense Language Institute
DLPT	Defense Language Proficiency Test
DOD	Department of Defense
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
GAO	General Accounting Office
ISAs	Instructional Systems Audits
NSA	National Security Agency
TLAs	technical language assistants
TLOs	terminal learning objectives
TRADOC	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Defense Language Institute (DLI), Foreign Language Center, in Monterey, California, was established to provide foreign language training for the entire Department of Defense (DOD). DLI is under the administrative control of the Department of the Army and more specifically under that of the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) at Fort Monroe, Virginia. DLI's mission is very important because its products, foreign-language-trained personnel, support the defense intelligence mission. Although linguists constitute a very small percentage of total military personnel, DOD considers them an essential element for preserving national security.

DLI conducts full-time intensive foreign language training and provides technical control for all other foreign language training conducted in DOD, except for military academies and overseas DOD-operated schools. The instructional program is uniquely geared to the needs of defense, and most DLI students are active duty enlisted service members who eventually are assigned to defense intelligence jobs. DLI's basic resident courses, those taught at the Presidio of Monterey and at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, are aimed at developing working level competencies in listening comprehension, reading, speaking, and writing. DLI also develops nonresident language training programs for people in military field units and elsewhere to regain, maintain, or enhance language proficiency by jobs and missions. In addition, DLI is responsible for

--developing and maintaining instructional material for both the resident and nonresident programs;

--planning for faculty development;

--employing, training, and maintaining qualified subject matter experts in job and task analysis, testing, evaluation, curriculum development, and instruction in foreign languages; and

--exercising quality control over the foreign language program by providing standards and tests to measure language proficiency.

DLI currently provides training in about 37 major languages and dialects; it relies almost solely on native-speaking instructors. DLI exercises very little real control over the numbers and timing of students scheduled for language training or the languages to be taught. User agencies determine terminal learning objectives (required language skills) and, in conjunction with DLI, establish the length of time students will be in training. Except for the Army, the services also maintain administrative control over their own students while at DLI. Coordination

between DLI and user agencies is done primarily through an annual program review at the beginning of each calendar year. Staffing at DLI includes some 350 military personnel and a civilian work force of 850, of which about 600 are faculty members. DLI teaches foreign languages to about 3,500 service students per year (the student load averages about 2,600), of which the largest number belongs to the Department of the Army. (App. II lists student enrollment and number of instructors by language as of September 1981.)

QUALITY OF LINGUISTS AND TRAINING HAS BEEN A LONGSTANDING CONCERN

The quality of foreign language training and the competence of military and civilian linguists have been longstanding concerns. For example, we reported in 1973 1/ that foreign-language-training programs did not always give personnel the proficiency required to do their jobs. We also reported in 1980 2/ that DOD had a large number of language-designated positions either unfilled or not filled at the required proficiency level. In addition, what they learned was often not specifically related to the requirements of their jobs. User agencies also have become increasingly vocal about the inability of DLI-trained personnel newly assigned at duty stations to perform basic linguist duties.

In addition, DLI's own evaluations of tactical and strategic intelligence units, conducted in fiscal years 1979 and 1981, confirmed users' complaints. A major reason often cited by linguists and their supervisors for language deficiencies was inadequate basic language training while at DLI.

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

At the request of Congressman Leon E. Panetta, we reviewed the operations and training at DLI. This review was performed in Monterey between January and September 1981 in accordance with our Office's current "Standards for Audit of Governmental Organizations, Programs, Activities, and Functions." Our objective was to identify and analyze those significant internal problems that diminish the overall effectiveness of language training.

Congressman Panetta agreed that we would address only those issues which related directly to DLI training capabilities and

---

1/"Need To Improve Language Training Programs and Assignments for U.S. Government Personnel Overseas" (B-176049, Jan. 22, 1973).

2/"More Competence in Foreign Languages Needed by Federal Personnel Working Overseas" (ID-80-31, Apr. 15, 1980).

were within the jurisdiction of the Commandant of DLI to correct. The three issues examined were the adequacy of (1) course development activities, (2) management of classroom instruction, and (3) evaluation of graduates and training.

Our review included an analysis of previous studies (see app. III) of DLI and an examination of the fiscal years 1979 and 1981 external field evaluations that DLI performed. We did not verify the accuracy of findings reported by these evaluations, nor did we evaluate the methodology used in making the evaluations or in developing the respective findings.

Our work also included examinations of various internal documents, such as DLI Instructional Systems Audits; recently completed student and faculty questionnaires; DLI regulations and internal documented policy guidance on instructional methodology, testing and grading, and course development activities; and instructors' training and appraisal records. We also reviewed student end-of-course grades and compared them with students' language proficiency test results to determine if students could attain the level of proficiency required by users.

Interviews with department heads, supervisors, instructors, and students were confined to the six largest language departments--Russian, German, Korean, Chinese, Arabic, and Spanish--which in total account for over 90 percent of both faculty and students at DLI. Individuals interviewed were randomly selected to obtain a cross section of opinions. However, these selections do not constitute a statistical sample and, therefore, opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of all DLI faculty and students.

Other internal problems at DLI, such as the questions of competitive versus excepted service status for DLI faculty, employee morale and grievances, abolishment of the Academic Senate, cross-cultural communication difficulties, and organizational structure issues, were not reviewed, as agreed with Congressman Panetta.

CHAPTER 2

DLI's COURSE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS HAVE BEEN UNPRODUCTIVE

Students are not receiving up-to-date language instruction. DLI officials, user agencies' representatives, and others acknowledge that DLI's resident courses are outdated, but DLI has made little progress in developing new resident materials for basic courses. Between fiscal year 1978 and the second quarter of fiscal year 1981, DLI used about $4.2 million and 159 staff-years for course development and has yet to develop updated basic course materials. DLI's lack of progress has been caused largely by DLI's failure to

--effectively set course development priorities between its resident and nonresident courses,

--properly implement the Interservice Procedures for Instructional Systems Development promulgated by TRADOC,

--effectively monitor the progress of ongoing course development projects,

--fully pursue acquisition of commercial texts as an alternative to in-house course development, and

--use contracting effectively to obtain needed materials and to increase the use of in-house resources.

DLI officials acknowledged that the Directorate of Training Development had not completely rewritten any resident basic courses. However, lack of progress was attributed to the (1) development of nonresident materials requested by user agencies for worldwide use, (2) rigorous and time-consuming requirements of TRADOC's Interservice Procedures for Instructional Systems Development, and (3) numerous delays in completing course development projects caused by project staffing difficulties and interruptions.

FAILURE TO EFFECTIVELY SET PRIORITY ON RESIDENT BASIC COURSES RESULTED IN DISPROPORTIONATE AMOUNT OF RESOURCES SPENT ON NONRESIDENT COURSES

Despite the need for new resident basic courses, DLI has not effectively set priority on these projects and has spent disproportionate resources on nonresident course development.

DLI develops materials for both resident and nonresident courses. Resident training is that training which takes place at the Presidio of Monterey and Lackland Air Force Base and consists

primarily of the basic, intermediate, and advanced courses. Nonresident training, as the name implies, is designed for use at military activities where linguists are employed.

New resident basic course materials are needed but have not been developed

Many sources have noted that DLI's resident courses need revision. In 1979 it was reported that resident course materials ranged in age from 4 to 27 years and desperately needed attention. Despite DLI's course development efforts, however, no new resident courses have been implemented since 1976. Furthermore, DLI's primary user agency, the National Security Agency (NSA), during a special program review conducted at DLI during December 1980, charged that:

> "While 177 manyears have been expended in course development not a single resident course has been completed."

DLI officials do not dispute the fact that resident course materials are outdated.

DLI has no system to effectively set course development priorities

DLI's course development process depends upon obtaining the consensus of the user agencies during the annual program reviews. DLI officials told us there was no formal list of priorities; however, priorities are now stated within the Five-Year Plan for course development. User agency officials told us that, prior to the approved Five-Year Plan, DLI had been unable to set clear course development priorities because there had been no consensus among the user agencies as to what courses should have the highest priority. For example, while NSA placed its priority on resident course development, two Army commands were more concerned with obtaining nonresident materials. In addition, the Marine Corps, while it concurred in the need to place priority on development of resident basic courses, also desired further development of Training Extension Courses. The Marine Corps later objected when DLI curtailed some extension course development in favor of basic course projects.

Disproportionate amount of resources have been spent on nonresident courses

DLI has not balanced the priority for its course development needs. A disportionate amount of resources have been expended on nonresident courses in trying to satisfy the diverse needs of user agencies.

Our computations, made from data in DLI's records, show that, of the 159.1 staff-years expended for course development between fiscal year 1978 and the second quarter of fiscal year 1981, only 33 percent was spent on resident courses while 67 percent was spent on nonresident courses, as shown by the following table.

Resident courses:	
Basic course development	51.1
Basic course revision	0.6
Intermediate and advanced course development	0.9
Total	52.6
Nonresident courses:	
Headstart course development and revision	16.7
Gateway course development and revision	16.2
Refresher and maintenance course development	13.2
Training extension course development	60.5
Total	106.6

DLI HAS IMPROPERLY IMPLEMENTED THE INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

DLI uses TRADOC's instructional systems development approach guidance for language course development. DLI has adopted the approach because it contends that it is the best method for developing training that effectively meets user needs. However, we found that DLI had improperly implemented this approach for some of its high-density basic courses now undergoing revision.

DLI Memorandum 5-2, "Planning and Management of Training Development Projects," dated March 15, 1979, provides that training development be accomplished in accordance with TRADOC Pamphlet 350-30, "Interservice Procedures for Instructional Systems Development." The process, as detailed by Pamphlet 350-30, outlines five sequential phases in the development of training materials: analysis, design, development, implementation, and control. We found, however, that for at least three courses being revised--Basic Russian, Basic Chinese Mandarin, and Spanish refresher/maintenance--DLI had conducted the phases in the wrong order. In all cases, the development phase preceded the analysis phase.

Lack of appropriate front-end analysis before designing and developing courses has also been cited in a previous external evaluation as a roadblock to successful course development. A 1979 TRADOC Inspector General evaluation noted that no significant improvements had been made in the basic resident course since TRADOC's prior 1978 annual inspection. According to the evaluation, the primary problem hindering effective basic course development was the lack of analysis of the basic language

requirements to determine what skills should be taught. The Inspector General added that DLI's Analysis Division lacked guidance on establishing priorities in order to best use extremely limited resources.

A Training Development official said DLI had deviated from the instructional systems model because during 1976 considerable emphasis by the Commandant was placed on the need to update old course materials. Consequently, in trying to expedite development of new materials, Training Development gave less attention to analysis and design while prematurely focusing on development.

DLI HAS NOT ESTABLISHED ADEQUATE CONTROLS BY WHICH TO MONITOR AND MANAGE PROJECTS

DLI has not established adequate controls for monitoring progress and managing the development of course materials. Project work plans are constantly being revised to reflect the current situation; project status reports contain inaccurate data; and the lack of a standard for measuring productivity has hindered DLI's ability to monitor and manage course development.

As a management tool, the work plans are of limited use because of constant revisions. DLI has allowed the project teams to revise their work plans to reflect current estimates, thereby limiting their value as a baseline from which to measure variances, assess the reasons for variances, and make needed corrections. We were told that DLI had not required teams to conform with realistic work plans because the project officers were reluctant to commit themselves to milestones. In addition, officials stated that resource and staffing priorities were so erratic that realistic planning was meaningless. Because of the absence of records, we could not determine the amount of slippage the original work plans had undergone.

Project status reports are another management tool. According to DLI Memo 5-2, these reports should establish and maintain continuous records on cost, time, manpower use, work accomplishments, and developmental problems. They should also help managers to (1) project future developmental resource requirements, (2) reach make or buy decisions, and (3) perform problem-solving analyses. However, the reports, cannot measure the progress of development because of changing work plans as discussed above, nor do they accurately report the staff-hours charged to projects. In a sample of 11 of the 20 projects ongoing during the second quarter of fiscal year 1981, the staff-hours charged for each project on the reports did not agree with those on DLI's computer system. The discrepancy ranged from 21.9 to 180.9 staff-hours.

In addition, DLI has not developed or used performance standards to measure the productivity of its project teams. NSA uses a 6:1 ratio; that is, the number of staff-hours required to develop

materials for 1 hour of classroom instruction, as a standard for developing its language courses. While DLI argued that NSA's ratio was unrealistically low, DLI still has not seriously tried to develop its own standards. It has been suggested that DLI obtain additional staff to develop standards; however, action on this suggestion is pending the results of a planned staffing survey.

DLI HAS NOT FULLY EXPLORED THE POTENTIAL OF USING COMMERCIAL TEXTBOOKS

Usage of commercial texts has been minimal despite DLI's policy requiring such materials to be evaluated and used whenever justified on a cost, quality, or timing basis. We could not find, nor could officials provide records to indicate, that DLI had formally evaluated or incorporated commercial texts before initiating costly and time-consuming in-house development. We were told that, although project teams reviewed commercial texts, DLI had not documented the evaluation process, nor had it provided specific guidance to the teams on the content, methodology, or extent of the evaluations.

For example, "Deutsch activ," a German textbook, was reviewed by DLI staff and was said to be excellent for its superior use of communicative skills. However, a formal evaluation comparing the text to DLI needs and a quantitative analysis of what it would cost to adapt and use the textbook at DLI were never performed. Regardless, DLI awarded a contract for $25,460 for initial development of the German Basic Course. The contract was not successful, and DLI is now trying to develop the German Basic Course in-house using portions of the "Deutsch activ" text, pending an agreement with the German publisher.

DLI staff have raised several objections to using commercial texts. We were told that commercial texts were geared to a different audience, they lacked military "flavor" or terminology, or copyright and availability problems would interfere. These objections, however, have been discounted by user agencies and other DLI staff for the following reasons:

--A good basic text could serve as the framework for a course with additional exercises and other supplemental materials to provide the intensity needed by DLI.

--Basic courses are not military specific until the end, and military terminology could easily be added.

--NSA and the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) both use commercial texts extensively for their language courses.

DLI HAS HAD POOR RESULTS IN CONTRACTING FOR BASIC COURSE DEVELOPMENT

DLI's efforts to contract out basic course development have not been successful. Officials acknowledge that contracts for course development between 1969 and 1975 produced little usable materials, and no completed basic courses were ever delivered or put into use at DLI. The only contract for basic course development since this period did not produce satisfactory results either. Failure of the 1969-75 contracts has been attributed primarily to poor contract specifications.

DLI has entered into only one contract for basic course development since the 1969-75 period; this was for the German Basic Course. The contract was awarded in September 1980 for the amount of $25,460 and was terminated in May 1981. Although all the lessons specified in the initial contract were received, the materials were not usable. According to DLI officials, specifications were not at fault for failure of the contract. Instead, they said, DLI's inability to effectively monitor and control the contract caused its failure.

CONCLUSIONS

Existing basic courses have deteriorated to the point where there is a detrimental effect on the quality of training. Course development projects have proceeded slowly because of the lack of appropriate priorities, improperly implemented course development procedures, ineffective monitoring and management of development projects, failure to fully explore the potential benefits of commercial texts, and unsuccessful contracting efforts.

DLI needs to develop a system based on internal as well as external inputs for assessing course development priority needs. Establishing controls over its course development projects along with an evaluation of alternative course materials should improve course development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army direct the Commandant of DLI to

--develop resident basic courses using commercially available materials whenever these can be adapted at less cost and in less time than in-house development and

--establish controls over course development projects which provide the means to assess progress against specified target dates.

AGENCY COMMENTS

In their March 19, 1982, comments (see app. I), DOD officials agreed that DLI could have better managed its course development resources; however, they emphasized that their investment in course development would begin to be realized in 1982 with the completion of the Basic Russian course. We have not verified that DOD will meet the projected completion date for the Basic Russian course. In addition, DOD in March 1982 reported the status for several additional basic language courses but did not provide any estimated completion dates for these courses, and we have not attempted to verify the provided information. While DOD commented that it had used and adapted commercial materials for several of its courses, we found only very limited use of commercial materials and continue to believe that greater use is necessary if the Institute is to achieve its course development goals. DOD officials reported that production control measures had been recently instituted to more closely monitor the progress of course development activities.

DOD comments indicated that the 5-year training development plan establishes project priorities, and the Institute and user agencies now agree on resident and nonresident course development priorities. DOD specifically commented that, as of March 1982, 74 percent of course development resources have been allocated for resident programs while 26 percent have been allocated for development of nonresident and refresher/maintenance programs. Accordingly, we have dropped our proposed recommendation to establish a more effective process for setting project priorities.

DOD commented that it had accomplished our proposed recommendation to establish controls over course development activities by late 1981. However, the recency of DOD's actions and the lack of information as to how these actions will achieve the intent of our proposed recommendation cause us to continue to believe that controls are needed.

CHAPTER 3

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION CAN BE BETTER MANAGED AND SUPERVISED

Important elements of classroom instruction could be better managed and supervised. Many problems have been identified in past studies conducted by DLI and other organizations. However, to date, some important training policies and procedures are either lacking or unclear or have been poorly implemented. We found that:

--DLI lacked an officially approved and accepted teaching methodology for instructors to use.

--Instructors, once hired, received only limited training in classroom instruction.

--Instructors were not being adequately evaluated on their instructional capabilities.

--DLI's evaluations of training quality were not effective because of poor response to recommendations and inadequate followup on them.

--Technical language assistants (TLAs) provided to DLI have not been used effectively.

While these problems have not been solved, recent DLI initiatives, such as revising instructor-hiring standards, instituting a new program to improve the use of TLAs, and creating and filling the position of Academic Dean, are all aimed at improving classroom instruction.

OFFICIALLY APPROVED AND ACCEPTED TEACHING METHODOLOGY IS LACKING

DLI has had no definitive policy on methodology or the theory of foreign language training since January 1976. Before 1976, a definitive "official policy" on methodology was contained in DLI Pamphlet 350-4, entitled "DLI Guidelines." This pamphlet dealt with the principles and methods of teaching and learning in the Defense Language Program. However, in January 1976 the pamphlet was rescinded and has not been replaced. Although two memorandums dealing with course methodology were written after the pamphlet was rescinded, they were not adopted internally by DLI as official guidance to the departments.

Teaching methodology at DLI varies widely even within the same language department. Interviews with department heads, supervisors, instructors, and students substantiated the use

of different methodologies. They variously described the methodologies as "eclectic, audio-lingual, cognitive, inductive, pluralistic, improvisational, and doing their own thing." One instructor claimed that six different methodologies were used indiscriminately in his department. Other instructors said they had no official DLI methodology, or they simply followed the textbook. DLI officials acknowledged that the use of various methodologies had an unpredictable effect on the quality of instruction and that language departments had, in effect, been allowed to do "their own thing." They also acknowledged that DLI needed to develop and "package" a methodology to make it easier to understand and follow.

INSTRUCTOR TRAINING IS LIMITED

Many of the newly hired instructors are not completing basic instructor training, and even fewer receive additional training for self-development and job advancement. Although DLI gives most new instructors some training and orientation, it has not been consistent in routinely updating and reinforcing the earlier training with additional training.

Training records showed that 77 percent of instructors hired between January 1980 and May 1981 received "Basic Instructor Training, Phase I." This 2-week course, supplemented by a 1-week in-class observation, is designed to give native or near-native speakers of foreign languages the skills, knowledge, and abilities to function as DLI instructors. "Basic Instructor Training, Phase II," is an observation period during which an instructor is evaluated on how well he or she applies the techniques learned in phase I. During the same period, however, only 16 percent of those who completed phase I completed phase II. Further, records indicated that, during this period, few instructors attended other DLI courses.

SUPERVISORS NOT PROPERLY EVALUATING INSTRUCTORS

Language department supervisors are not properly evaluating instructors' classroom performance. DLI guidelines specify the most important tool in performance evaluation is the supervisor audit. This is an unscheduled visit to a class by a department supervisor for observing and recording on-the-job behavior and appraising performance. Each audit should include such events as observing behavior, writing observations, discussing performance with the instructor, counseling the instructor as required, and insuring the appropriate observation form is cosigned by the instructor.

The supervisor is responsible for observing instructor performance for a full teaching period at a minimum of 6 times

a year or more often if necessary. Instructor observation forms serve as records of an instructor's performance and as support for written performance appraisals.

While, in theory, the supervisor visit is an important evaluation tool, we found that supervisors were not carrying out these responsibilities. For example, we interviewed 14 of the 28 supervisors (or 50 percent) in the 6 largest departments, all of whom indicated that they did not visit their instructors' classes regularly; about half indicated they visited classes as infrequently as twice a year. Furthermore, they did not always record their observations. Also, instructors in four of these departments said they had not been counseled by supervisors, although this is required after the visit.

DLI officials said they were developing a new performance appraisal policy and related procedures which were expected to provide additional guidance on instructor evaluations.

RESPONSE TO TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS HAS BEEN POOR AND FOLLOWUP HAS BEEN INEFFECTIVE

Reviews of DLI's instructional delivery system, Instructional Systems Audits (ISAs), are performed to determine the means of improving the effectiveness or efficiency of classroom instruction. However, procedures for monitoring and implementing ISA recommendations were not followed. Specifically, we found that:

--The Directorate of Evaluation had never implemented monitoring procedures for ISA recommendations although a September 1, 1978, DLI memorandum indicated such procedures existed.

--The Directorate of Training had delegated to its individual language departments the responsibility for implementing ISA recommendations and had not insured compliance.

The Director of Training acknowledged that implementing ISA recommendations had been left to the departments. The Director said he had made a conscious attempt to decentralize authority and thereby allowed the departments greater control.

This delegation of authority, however, apparently did not result in timely training improvements. In a memorandum to the Director of Training in September 1980, the former Commandant at DLI noted that one department's reply was so general that it led him to believe the department took the ISA report under advisement rather than identify the tasks needed to be accomplished in order to enhance the operation of the department and that, had a status report not been requested, the recommendations would not have been seriously followed up.

In an apparent effort to improve department responsiveness to ISA recommendations, a revision to DLI Memo 350-5, dated January 15, 1981, assigned monitoring of ISA recommendations to the newly formed Office of the Academic Dean. However, to date, written procedures for carrying out this responsibility have not been developed. DLI officials told us, though, that, as of September 1981, new ISA procedures were being readied for dissemination.

TLAs HAVE NOT BEEN USED EFFECTIVELY

TLAs have not been effectively used, and no central authority has coordinated their use by individual departments. About 60 TLAs have been assigned to language departments and course development. These were career military linguists with field experience who could give students a practical view of the application of foreign language training to actual job duties. Their duties at DLI included, but were not limited to:

--Explaining military terminology.

--Assisting in conducting and grading language laboratory work.

--Assisting faculty in classroom instruction, administering tests, supervising of study halls, and tutoring.

During the Special Program Review in December 1980 and the Annual Program Review in February 1981, disagreement arose between DLI and NSA regarding the TLAs' role. NSA contended that DLI intended to use the TLAs as counselors rather than to assist in mission accomplishment as originally intended. It further contended that this shift had a "deleterious effect upon both TLA morale and effectiveness" and that the TLAs' language expertise could be better used elsewhere in the defense community. Although several of the departments we reviewed had assigned meaningful duties to TLAs, others had not. One department considered the TLAs to be "spies" for the user agencies and refused to allow them significant roles in the instructional program.

DLI officials acknowledged that some departments did not use TLAs effectively. However, they pointed out that, in response to user agency criticisms and as an attempt to correct shortcomings in the previous memorandum of understanding, a new program had recently been established. This program, implemented on August 28, 1981, is intended to insure proper use of the TLAs at DLI as well as to develop a "cadre of expert military linguists." Overall, the program assigns to the Commandant operational control over all TLAs and assigns program responsibility to the Director of Training.

CONCLUSIONS

DLI officials must exercise greater oversight over the school's instructional system so as to insure an optimum level of instructional quality. Lack of official policy guidance on training methodology, instructor training, and instructor evaluations and inadequate or untimely response to suggested improvements to the instructional system are degrading the quality of language training linguists receive and could adversely affect their job performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army require the Commandant to:

--Develop and distribute a standard schoolwide training methodology for use in all DLI's language departments.

--Require all newly hired instructors to complete both phases of the basic instructor-training course. Instructors should be encouraged to seek out additional training to improve their instructional abilities as part of the individual development programs.

--Establish procedures to carry out the reinstated policy for supervisory classroom visits and hold supervisors accountable for routinely observing instructor classroom behavior.

AGENCY COMMENTS

DOD did not directly address our recommendations to develop and distribute a standard training methodology for use in all language departments. It responded that DLI had begun a major revision to its entire faculty professional development program. DOD reported that, from January 1980 to February 22, 1982, a total of 506 faculty members received additional training aside from the Basic Instructor Training Workshops. As noted on page 12, we addressed only newly hired instructors through May 1981 and primarily the second phase of basic instructor training rather than additional training reported in DOD comments for its faculty.

Revision of DLI faculty professional development program, realignment of the Faculty and Staff Development Division under the Office of the Academic Dean, and changes to procedures for responding to the results of Instructional System Audits and field evaluations were reported as recent measures which should help to improve the management of DLI classroom training.

Concerning the proposed recommendation in our draft report for requiring additional training for new instructors, DOD officials responded that the requirement for additional training for new instructors could best be incorporated in individual development plans. We concurred in this approach for managing instructor training and have modified the recommendation accordingly. (DOD's official comments are included as app. I.)

The intent of our proposed recommendation on supervisory classroom visits was to establish a policy and implement it. DOD commented that the policy for supervisory visits to classrooms which had been rescinded in the 1970s was recently reinstated. It did not comment on how the policy is to be implemented or if and how supervisors will be held accountable for following the policy. We have therefore revised our proposed recommendation to provide for a management control that can be used to insure compliance with the supervisory visits policy.

CHAPTER 4

DLI LACKS AN ADEQUATE MECHANISM FOR DETERMINING THE QUALITY OF ITS STUDENTS

DLI's existing evaluation process is inadequate for assessing student proficiency or determining how well the DLI is performing its language-training mission. Specifically, we found that:

--DLI did not have a cohesive statement of its training objectives and standards.

--Proficiency testing had not been adequately developed as an evaluation tool and the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) was not relied on for determining proficiency of graduates.

--Development of criterion-referenced tests, which measure achievement of users' terminal learning objectives (TLOs), had not progressed.

DLI DOES NOT HAVE A COHESIVE STATEMENT OF ITS TRAINING OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS

Before any evaluation of DLI's training system can be effective, there must be a clear understanding of exactly what the training objectives and standards are. Yet DLI's objectives and standards are not clear, and this has caused confusion over what to evaluate or what the proficiency level of graduates should be.

Since 1976 DLI has not had a single cohesive policy document clearly explaining the training objectives and standards and their interrelationship. Before this time, however, DLI's training objective was to give students a foundation in the language sufficient to attain proficiency level 2 (limited working proficiency) in reading and writing and level 3 (minimum professional proficiency) in listening and speaking, but such general language training was not designed to prepare students for any particular type of mission or assignment.

As described by FSI's proficiency index, one who has achieved level 2 for reading can read simple narrative on familiar subject matter and, aided by a dictionary, he/she can get the general sense of written communications. One who has achieved level 2 for writing can write sentences on familiar topics appropriately using technical language vocabulary; errors in spelling and structure occasionally obscure the meaning of written material. On the other hand, level 3 listening and speaking require more ability. To achieve level 3 listening, an individual should be able

to understand general conversation or discussion on topics within his/her special field. Similarly, a person speaking at level 3 must be able to participate effectively in all general conversation and discuss particular interests in his/her special field without making errors that obscure meaning. (App. IV lists FSI's proficiency level descriptions.)

In 1977, DLI requested and received from its user agencies a new set of TLOs which more clearly specified the skills that students should master to be able to perform their language duties. The TLOs consist of 25 objectives which, if achieved, would yield a basic language student able to assume assigned linguistic tasks. Examples of TLOs involve such objectives as spoken interpretation, reading interpretation, conversational response, transcription/written response, etc. However, the TLOs when received did not specify quantitative standards by which to measure achievement of these objectives. Such standards should spell out the performance level that would be acceptable to users. For example, reading interpretation is one skill identified in the TLOs. To satisfactorily demonstrate attainment of this skill, standards should specify the level of accuracy that would be generally acceptable; that is, the individual should accurately interpret all information conveyed or 75 percent of the information and/or must be able to organize it in the sequence originally conveyed.

Notwithstanding the lack of specific standards, DLI, in 1977, began to incorporate the new TLOs into its policies and training program. However, without specific standards, DLI did not know whether the TLOs were being achieved, and DLI continued to provide instruction and graduate students on essentially the same basis that it had done before receiving the new TLOs.

Because of the absence of specific standards, various DLI staff with whom we spoke had differing understandings of what DLI's mission and course objectives were. Some said DLI's basic courses were supposed to meet proficiency level 3, others told us level 2, and some said the courses should meet the TLOs. Notably, there is no recognized connection between the proficiency level descriptions and TLOs.

The Director of Evaluation, in a March 1981 memorandum to the Commandant, characterized the ambiguity over DLI's mission objectives and training standards as a "systemic problem." He explained that TLOs were only tangentially addressed in the course objectives, the graduation criteria, the instruction, or the final examination and that the ambiguity of proficiency level descriptions resulted in inconsistent interpretations by instructors.

DLI officials with whom we discussed this matter, including the Director of Training Development and the Director of Evaluation, agreed that ambiguity in mission statement and course

objectives and the lack of training standards were causing misunderstanding over what DLI should be expected to accomplish and that cohesive policy guidelines were needed similar to those which existed in 1976.

CURRENT PROFICIENCY TESTS ARE NOT RELIED ON AS A MEASURE OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DLI's TRAINING SYSTEM

The only yardstick for measuring the overall effectiveness of DLI training or student proficiency is the DLPT. Yet, even though DLI administers the DLPT, it is not a graduation requirement and it is not relied upon as a primary measure of training effectiveness. DLI officials pointed out that the DLPT had been designed to screen personnel for general language proficiency and had never been validated against objective standards of proficiency. Nonetheless, a 1973 GAO report 1/ concluded that reliable proficiency testing was needed to evaluate training effectiveness. The DLPT administered by DLI consists of 120 multiple-choice items covering 2 (listening and reading) of the 4 language skills taught at DLI (additionally, speaking and writing) and takes about 1 hour to administer. Scores are converted into proficiency levels ranging from level 0 (no proficiency) to level 3 (minimum professional) on a scale developed years ago by FSI.

Although DLI administers the DLPT at the time of graduation, it does not rely on the scores because there is no assurance of how accurately proficiency, as indicated by the FSI proficiency levels, equates to the DLPT because the method of converting or transforming DLPT scores to FSI's proficiency levels has never been validated. In other words, it has never been scientifically established as to what raw scores from the DLPT equate to FSI levels. DLI officials acknowledged that lack of validation diminished confidence in the meaning of the proficiency levels assigned when students completed the DLPT. They said, however, that a project was underway which would establish generally accepted standards so that DLPT scores would have more meaning. DLI's Director of Evaluation and the Chief of Test Division both agreed that the results of this project, if successful, would be a more useful measure of proficiency and that it would not be unreasonable to require that students attain the levels specified in whatever training objectives that DLI decided to establish.

Students of DLI graduate solely on the basis of scores they achieve on various interim tests and a final test at the end of the course, instead of proficiency test results. These tests measure achievement of course contents and are not related to

---

1/"Need To Improve Language Training Programs and Assignments for U.S. Government Personnel Overseas" (B-176049, Jan. 22, 1973).

the FSI proficiency levels. Although a correlation exists between end-of-course grades and DLPT proficiency levels, DLI does graduate students who do not attain a high level of proficiency, even though some students achieve high scores for their final course grades. For example, of about 26,000 students who graduated between 1974 and 1981, 2,661 graduates attained level 1 or lower in the listening skill. Similarly, 2,354 graduates attained level 1 or lower for the reading skill. Due to the number of graduates involved, we did not try to determine why they could not attain level 2 or higher for these skills. For example, we do not know the extent to which this may be due to errors in measurement or clerical recording errors and, thus, cannot say with any assurance whether students have mastered language training at DLI.

CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED SLOWLY--TESTS SHOULD REFERENCE TLOs

DLI's course tests have been the subject of criticism. In its review of DLI graduates assigned to military field units, DLI's Directorate of Evaluation concluded that DLI needed to devise tests for measuring the skills students had been taught at Monterey. DLI officials acknowledged that developing criterion-referenced tests would overcome the deficiencies in existing tests; however, development of these tests has been ongoing since 1978, with very little progress.

Criterion-referenced tests are designed to measure how well students have learned language skills specified in the TLOs. We agree that these tests should provide a more objective measurement of achievement. However, we were told that these tests were not being written and validated directly to TLOs. DLI officials said they had experienced difficulty in developing these tests because TLOs did not detail the level of achievement needed. Therefore, tests could not measure how well course objectives, based on TLOs, had been achieved. Furthermore, DLI officials stated that NSA had declined a request to validate DLI tests in actual job environments.

Although DLI labels the tests it is developing as criterion referenced, we were told that DLI had curtailed its attempts to write tests based on TLOs. Instead, we were told that the new tests being developed merely represented achievement tests on new basic course materials being developed. DLI officials claimed that, since new courses were being developed on the basis of NSA's TLOs, new tests would be a better indicator of whether students had been able to achieve stated objectives.

CONCLUSIONS

Lack of clear and cohesive training objectives and standards to measure language proficiency has prevented DLI from effectively appraising its training mission. Although we believe that student language proficiency is the best indicator for determining the effectiveness of training, DLI continues to appraise its overall training effectiveness on the basis of student grades and achievement tests.

In line with our 1973 report, we continue to believe that valid, reliable proficiency testing is a key element of sound evaluation. Such tests would reveal which students were well qualified for graduation and could identify areas where training could be improved. Although DLI is developing new tests to complement new courses, they may not be fully satisfactory for determining the quality of its training or the skills of its graduates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army direct the Commandant of DLI to:

--Establish realistic training objectives based on mission requirements and use the DLPT to measure graduate students' performance in satisfaction of these objectives and require that students pass the DLPT as a condition for graduation.

--Develop a DLPT that will measure student proficiency of the objectives and standards established by DLI.

AGENCY COMMENTS

DOD agrees that establishing training objectives based on mission requirements is the foundation needed before language proficiency can be measured. DOD reported that DLI is an active participant of the Interagency Language Roundtable which is reviewing U.S. Government language proficiency standards. These standards, when published, will be the benchmarks for DLI training objectives.

Furthermore, DOD agreed with our proposed recommendation to establish realistic training objectives which can be evaluated by using the DLPT. At DOD's suggestion, we modified our proposed recommendation to require the Secretary of the Army to establish realistic training objectives based on mission requirements and to use the DLPT to measure performance. In addition, in accordance with DOD's suggestion, we added as part of this recommendation that passing the DLPT be a requirement for graduation and deleted the separate recommendation which requested that the DLPT be used as a requirement for graduation.

DOD officials did not agree with our proposed recommendation to resolve the problem of converting DLPT scores to FSI proficiency descriptions but stated that DLI would redesign the DLPT to better meet its needs for assessing student proficiency. We concur in DOD's approach to assessing student proficiency and have changed our proposed recommendation accordingly. (See app. I for DOD's comments.)

APPENDIX I

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON D.C. 20301

RESEARCH AND
ENGINEERING

19 MAR 1982

Mr. Clifford I. Gould
Director, Federal Personnel
and Compensation Division
United States General Accounting
Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Gould:

This is in reply to your letter to the Secretary of Defense regarding your report dated February 18, 1982 on "Weaknesses in the Resident Language Training System of Defense Language Institute Affect the Quality of Trained Linguists" OSD Case #5904, GAO Code 961149. As enunciated in the March 5, 1982 meeting between Messrs. Kremer and Esposito from GAO, and personnel from the Department of Army Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, we share a common interest in the effectiveness of training at the DLIFLC. We also feel that there has been a high level of accomplishment at the DLI, and that many problems identified in the past, actions taken, programs developed, and resources committed are producing desirable results. Our investment in the DLI, like any other investment strategy, includes a commitment of resources--funds, personnel, and management attention. But it also includes time, time for the investment to realize its dividend. Many of the observations of the GAO review team were also made by DoD personnel, some, years ago. The effects of many of our corrective actions have, in fact, been realized since the departure of the on-site GAO team last September (1981). Therefore, we think it appropriate to offer as detailed an update as possible to the draft report in order for the GAO to present the most accurate picture of this important program to the Congress.

As agreed to during the March 5th meeting, our comments are divided into two major parts and are attached:

- Enclosure 1: proposed additional paragraph to Cover Summary; comments on Digest, recommendations, and proposed "Agency Comments" paragraph
- Enclosure 2: a by-chapter update.

We hope these comments can be used to enhance the report, and to picture the DLI in light of current efforts. Action in response to final GAO recommendations will be accomplished by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Army as appropriate.

Sincerely,

James P. Wade, Jr.

James P. Wade, Jr.
Principal Deputy Under Secretary of
Defense for Research and Engineering

Recommended additional paragraph to

"Cover Summary"

GAO acknowledges that many of the issues and problems cited in this study have also been recognized by the Department of Defense, and that corrective action has been started and in some cases accomplished. The increase in resources committed to support the Institute, the level of management attention devoted by Army and DoD-wide users, and recent internal organizational and leadership changes are indicative of movement toward an improved training effort.

Comments on "DIGEST"

Page i: (1) The DLI has no responsibility for foreign language training at the Service Academies or in Overseas Dependent Schools.

(2) Although changes in the "management of training" at the DLI may help to "improve the quality of language trained personnel," it is necessary to note that the training enterprise is only one subset of a much larger group of human resource considerations affecting personnel quality--to include a broad range of personnel administrative concerns, manpower management, compensation, recruitable labor sources, uniqueness of mission, deployment, and utilization. Undue weight on management changes at DLI to change the character of Defense human resources may be misleading. The DoD is, in fact, attempting to improve linguist personnel by addressing a much broader set of manpower and personnel issues.

Page ii: (1) The investment of resources (dollars and manyears) for training development has not been without yield. The investment started less than four years ago and new courses will be completed beginning calendar 1982 with continuous completions each year thereafter. A production time is a necessary and understandable component of any investment/development program. An accurate accounting of curriculum developments is offered in the comments on Chapter 2.

(2) Lack of rapid progress in course development is also attributable to a deliberate management decision to use limited resources to meet the priority mission--resident training of a rapidly increasing student load.

Comments on "Recommendations"

Recommendation #1 - In addition to commercial sources, DLI has also used other government agency and university programs.

Recommendation #3 - Already accomplished

Recommendation #5 - Recommend second sentence to read, "... to seek out additional training to improve instructional capabilities as part of Individual Development Programs."

Recommendation #6 - A policy of supervisory visits to classrooms exists. It had been temporarily recinded but has been reinstated.

Recommendation #7 - Training objectives are not derived through use of proficiency tests. Recommend rewrite to read:

> "Establish realistic training objectives based on mission requirements. Use the Defense Language Proficiency Test to measure student performance in satisfaction of those objectives."

Recommendation #8 - Nonconcur. DoD has no intention of converting DLPT scores to FSI proficiency levels. Current work in redesigning DLPT's is being coordinated with the State Department and other interested agencies.

Recommendation #9 - Recommend merge with recommendation #7, they are almost the same thing.

Recommended Additional Paragraph

Agency Comments:

The Department of Defense shares a common interest with the GAO in the effectiveness of training at the DLIFLC. We feel that there has been a high level of accomplishment and that many problems identified in the past, actions taken, programs developed, and resources committed are producing desirable results. The increased investment in the DLI should be viewed as any other investment: resources plus time yields a dividend. Many of the observations of the GAO review team were also made by DoD personnel as long as several years ago. The impact of many of our corrective actions is just now being felt, even though some were instituted years ago.

The Defense Foreign Language Training Program, and the Institute in Monterey are high priorities for the Department of the Army and the entire Defense community. We believe it is well on its way to accomplish mission requirements in a most effective and efficient way.

The following comments are offered to provide a more complete picture of DLIFLC operations. Some of these comments refer to past actions, some to recent DLIFLC in-house initatives, and some to new cooperative projects with other government agencies. Details on many of these programs can be found in the February 1982 GOSC and APR reports. The lauditory comments and spirit of cooperation evidenced by all in attendance at these conferences were in and of themselves a testimony of DLIFLC progress across a whole system of training activities.

Chapter 1

Page 2: (1) The DLI provides training in 37 major languages and dialects.

(2) The DLI determines course lengths in coordination with the Services and user agencies.

(3) The Commandant maintains administrative control of all Army students at the DLI.

Page 3: The 1980 GAO report on foreign language needs neither evaluated, analyzed, nor reported on extensive data provided by the Department of Defense concerning Defense foreign language requirements and capabilities. The Defense information was provided *en toto* to the interested Congressional Committees at DoD request and was only used by GAO to determine aggregate totals. It is completely misleading and false to reference the 1980 report as shedding any light on DoD linguistic competence or on the value of training programs.

Page 4: We have no record that the 1979 and 1981 DLI external field evaluations were generally accepted by Service officials.

Chapter 2

In the area of course development, resident course development has and will continue to take precedence over nonresident course development. However, nonresident projects will continue to be supported because they are needed to refresh, maintain, and improve the hand-won skills acquired in resident training courses. In short, they are needed to protect our linguistic investment. As of March 1982, 74 percent of course development resources are allocated for resident programs; 26 percent for nonresident and refresher/maintenance programs.

DLIFLC's priorities for course development are set by DoD user agencies (NSA and the Services). The current system for establishing project priorities through the TDFYP is efficient and effective and satisfies the needs of DoD user agencies. The TDFYP was again confirmed by all DoD user agencies during the APR of Feb 82. Other user agencies outside DoD also expressed confidence in the current system. Principals clearly confirmed that resident programs have priority over nonresident programs, that signal intelligence requirements have priority over other needs, and that potential "threat" languages have priority over "non threat" language. DLIFLC is meeting the needs of DoD user agencies in response to stated and approved priorities and has recently initiated a series of production control measures to improve course development programs.

APPENDIX I

DLIFLC is currently developing resident basic courses in Russian (will be completed in Sep 82, a validation edition is presently being taught in the classroom), Korean, (55% completed), German (10% completed), Arabic (Modern Standard), and three dialects; Egyptian (85% completed), Syrian (85% completed); and Spanish is also under development. Analysis and design packages for all Basic Courses presently under development have been completed. Analysis and design are also being initiated for new Italian, Greek, and Japanese Basic Courses. The above listed programs were approved and funded in the TDFYP and represent all high density "threat" languages. In addition, DLIFLC is continuously updating all Basic Courses through an established course maintenance program within the individual departments under the overall supervision of a newly developed position of language maintenance coordinator.

In concert with our course development efforts DLIFLC has not only adopted an instructional systems development approval, but has also contributed to the state of the art in foreign language curriculum development. DLIFLC also established, in late 1981, a program management which plans for and obtains adequate resources, and monitors and assesses the progress of all development projects. The Commandant and Academic Dean are provided a quarterly briefing on the status of each workplan.

While it is true that DLIFLC could have better managed course development resources in the past, performance in this area should be viewed with an understanding of the massive effort associated with the development of a single new Basic Course. Our new Basic Courses provide in one week the number of instructional hours in a quarter length college course. Furthermore, development goes far beyond just the preparation of classroom teaching materials to tests, instructor handbooks, home materials, etc. Multiply these major efforts times the number of high density "threat" languages and one can better understand the nature of manpower expenditures involved in the DLIFLC course development program.

DLIFLC has a long-standing policy of reviewing commercially available text materials for possible use in its curricula and has used and adapted commercial materials for several courses from time to time. The limited scope of these materials, copyright restrictions, frequently exorbitant prices, and uncertain availabilities are but a few of the factors which resulted in a conscious decision to "develop" rather than "buy" course materials in the past. Notwithstanding, these difficulties and uncertainities, DLIFLC still pursues the acquisition of appropriate commercial materials where appropriate. It should also be noted that CIA, NSA and FSI language schools also rely primarily on government-produced materials in their own high density language program basic courses.

Similarly, because non-government agencies have not had experience developing courses of the magnitude required for intensive DLIFLC training, we have learned to proceed with caution in contracting course development projects. Of course, where the required expertise exists, we will continue to maintain the option of developing materials under contract as we are now doing with several test development projects.

APPENDIX I

Chapter 3

DLIFLC regards professional faculty development as the cornerstone of DLIFLC training. We have been doing a lot in this area and will be doing even more.

Although the GAO report credits only "a few instructors" as having completed faculty training aside from the BITW Phase I, actually 506 faculty members received training during the period Jan 80 to 22 Feb 82; training subject matter and number of faculty in attendance are set forth below:

Course Description	Jan-May 81	Jun 81-Feb 82
Criterion Referenced Instruction(CRI)	36	9
Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT)	29	12
CRT for Managers	6	0
CRT for Item Writers	3	0
English for Professional Development	33	34
Group Dynamics & Leadership	29	0
Introduction to Linguistics	81	20
Audio-Visual Training	58	19
Counseling	22	58
Intro to Instructional Systems and Development and Lesson Design Validation Course	5	4
Applied Linguistics	31	15
Total	335	171

While the GAO reports only 77 percent of newly hired instructors as receiving "Basic Instructor Training - Phase I," nearly 95 percent of newly hired instructors received the two week Basic Instructor Training Workshop (BITW) Phase I during the period Jan 80 to present. The discrepancy in the two percentages appears to be attributable to the fact that only about 70 percent of BITW Phase I graduates completed the one week course of instruction, Introduction to Linguistics, presented immediately following completion of Phase I training. Internal review has found that this linguistics course is not appropriate for beginner instructor training.

DLIFLC has begun a major revision of the entire DLIFLC faculty professional development program, based on data identified during a Faculty and Staff Division Instructional Systems Audit (ISA) and follow-on DLFLC Faculty and Staff Division Task Force, and the more recent detailed review by the Academic Dean.

Plans have also been made for a detailed review of DLIFLC facility and staff courses and curricula by a team consisting of national-known visiting professors and selected members of the DLIFLC teaching and management staff who are well versed in professional faculty development. Extensive review and revision of current faculty professional development course materials will take place in the summer of CY 82. A thorough review and revision of other faculty development materials above and beyond BITW will also be initiated. Efforts in this

regard will be directed toward several major areas: basic teacher training, developing English language proficiency of the faculty; BITW reinforcement training one year following initial hire, supervisor and chairperson managerial training; refresher training for high tenure non-supervisory instructors, and expansion of audio-visual training in response for increased use of audio-visual technology in the classroom.

While teaching methodology will be part of this total review, it should be mentioned that DLIFLC presently has an eclectic approach to language learning comparable to that used by CIA, FSI, and NSA. Our failure has obviously been in not communicating to GAO and some members of our own faculty and staff that this eclectic approach is indeed a methodology. One of the most immediate difficulties in this regard is a problem of nomenclature. It is semantically impossible to talk about "the eclectic method."

Overall management of the Faculty and Staff Development Division has been placed directly under the Academic Dean's office to insure that full attention is given to this most important aspect of DLIFLC's training mission.

DLIFLC has revised post-Instructional Systems Audits and Field Evaluation report procedures. These changes require that the Directorate of Evaluation not only provide formal ISA and Field Evaluation Reports, but also a personal briefing to the Academic Dean, concerned Directorates, Group Chiefs and language Department Chairpersons. Additionally, the Directorate of Evaluation also now provides its recommendations to others at the post-ISA/Field Evaluation meetings. These recommendations are then discussed at length until a consensus is reached as to which are practical and feasible. This represents a change to procedures in effect during the period of the GAO report. At that time, the Directorate of Evaluation did not discuss its recommendation with concerned parties, with the result that often they were not well received and in turn, not followed through. The revised procedures have improved communications and led to the identification and implementation of more reasonable recommendations. The Academic Dean personally chairs the post ISA/Field Evaluation meetings and personally monitors execution of recommendations made.

The Directorate of Training, acting under direction of the DLIFLC Commandant, has launched a formal Defense Foreign Language Professional Development Program as a vehicle designed to improve management of technical language assistants in response to DLIFLC and DoD user agency needs.

Chapter 4

DLIFLC has as cohesive a set of standards as any U.S. Government agency, although they could be more specific; as a matter of fact, the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) which includes DLIFLC, NSA, CIA and FBI, is presently actively reviewing and will republish U.S. Government proficiency standards, which, when published, will be the benchmarks for DLIFLC training objectives. DLIFLC is playing an active and leading role in these ILR actions, and is working in close concert with all ILR participating agencies to improve U.S. Government standards as a whole. Some indicators of the leadership DLIFLC is

providing the language community in the area of language testing are the November 1981 National Language Proficiency Testing Conference, hosted by DLIFLC, and our active coordinating role in several interagency test development projects now being pursued.

Following publication of the ILR-developed U.S. Government proficiency standards, DLIFLC will revise its DLIFLC Memorandum on this subject to incorporate the spirit, thrust and intent of these new standards.

DLIFLC's mission is to provide general language training. DLIFLC's mission is not to prepare students for a specific mission, but rather, general language missions. DLIFLC's role in the foreign language learning process is to prepare its students for a wide variety of language-related occupational skills; for all of these jobs, language is a necessary, but not sufficient qualification for accomplishment of the task. Language is common to all of these occupational skills. Even NSA has gone on record stating that DLIFLC's mission is to prepare its students for general mission tasks, while NSA and Services are to provide specific job-related skills language training at follow-on MOS training facilities.

APPENDIX II

DLI STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND INSTRUCTORS

BY LANGUAGE AS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 1981

Language	Students	Instructors
Asian/Middle East group:		
Arabic	186	35
Chinese	196	37
Tagalog	2	1
Greek	31	8
Indonesian (including Malay)	7	3
Japanese	10	2
Korean	361	62
Persian	6	3
Thai	3	3
Turkish	36	11
Vietnamese	49	8
Total	887	173
Romantic/Germanic group:		
Albanian	2	1
Dutch	4	1
French	23	9
Hungarian	7	3
German	304	55
Italian	38	8
Norwegian	4	1
Portuguese	6	4
Romanian	7	2
Spanish	182	28
Total	577	112
Slavic group:		
Russian	a/1,213	a/179
Bulgarian	5	3
Czech	134	20
Polish	70	15
Serbo-Croatian	8	6
Total	1,430	223
Total	2,894	b/508

a/Includes 410 students and 55 faculty members at Lackland.

b/In addition, there are 389 secretarial and 68 management staff.

PREVIOUS STUDIES OF OPERATIONS AND TRAINING AT DLI

General Accounting Office, Need To Improve Language Training Programs and Assignments for U.S. Government Personnel Overseas, B-176049, January 22, 1973

General Accounting Office, Improvement Needed in Language Training and Assignments for U.S. Personnel Overseas, ID-76-19, June 16, 1976

General Accounting Office, Need to Improve Foreign Language Training Programs and Assignments for Department Defense Personnel, ID-76-73, November 24, 1976

General Accounting Office, More Competence in Foreign Languages Needed by Federal Personnel Working Overseas, ID-80-031, April 15, 1980

Army Training and Doctrine Command, Defense Language Institute Assessment, August 12, 1975

Defense Language Institute, Accreditation Self-Study Report, June 1978

United States Army Intelligence School, Fort Devens - Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center, Joint Field Evaluation, Far East and Germany, 1979

Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center, Field Evaluation of DLIFLC Graduates, European Command, April 24, 1981

President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies, Strength Through Wisdom: A Critique of U.S. Capability, November 1979

Army Training and Doctrine Command Inspector General, Report of Findings, March 2, 1979

Department of the Army, The Army Linguist Problem, April 24, 1980

Defense Language Institute, Special Program Review, Summary Report, December 1980

Defense Language Institute, Annual Program Review, Summary Report, February 1981

Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center, General Officer Steering Committee, Report, January 30, 1981

APPENDIX III

Army Training and Doctrine Command, Defense Language Institute, Foreign Language Center, Management Study, July 1981

Department of the Army, MILPERCEN Linguist Survey, 1977

Department of the Army, Army Linguists Personnel Study, 1976

Department of the Air Force, Study of Voice Processing Linguists, 1979

APPENDIX IV

Language Skill Level Descriptions

Level	Skill	Listening (L)	Speaking (S)	Reading (R)	Writing (W)
0	None	No practical understanding of the spoken language.	No practical speaking proficiency.	No practical reading proficiency.	No practical writing proficiency.
1	Elementary	Sufficient comprehension to meet survival needs and travel requirements. Able to understand the essentials of face-to-face speech in a standard dialect, often delivered at a rate slower than normal, with frequent repetitions, about basic needs: Meals and lodging, transportation, time, and simple directions (including both route instructions and orders from customs officials, policemen, etc.).	Able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements. Can ask and answer questions on topics very familiar to him/her within the scope of his/her very limited language experience, can understand simple questions and statements, allowing for slowed speech, repetition, or paraphrase; speaking vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs; error in pronunciation and grammar are frequent, but can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his/her language; while topics which are "very familiar" and elementary needs vary considerably from individual to individual, any person at this level should be able to order a simple meal, ask for shelter or lodging, ask and give simple directions, make purchases, and tell time.	Able to read some personal and place names, street signs, office and shop designations, numbers, and isolated words and phrases. Can recognize all the letters in the printed version of an alphabetic system and high-frequency elements of a syllabary or a character system.	Has sufficient control of the writing system to meet limited practical needs. Can produce all symbols in an alphabetic or syllabic writing system. Can write numbers and dates, his own name and nationality, addresses, etc. Otherwise, ability to write is limited to simple lists of common items or a few short sentences. Spelling may be erratic.
2	Limited Working	Sufficient comprehension to meet routine social demands and limited job requirements. Able to understand face-to-face speech in a standard dialect, delivered at a normal rate with some repetition and rewording, about everyday topics common personal and family news, well-known current events, and routine office matters; can follow the essentials of discussion or speech at an elementary level on topics in a special professional field.	Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements. Can handle with confidence, but not with facility, most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information; can handle limited work requirements, needing help in handling any complications or difficulties; can get the gist of most conversations on nontechnical subjects (i.e., topics which require no specialized knowledge) and has a speaking vocabulary sufficient to express himself/herself simply with some circumlocutions; accent, though often quite faulty, is intelligible; can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar.	Able to read simple prose, in a form equivalent to typescript or printing, on subjects within a familiar context. With extensive use of a dictionary can get the general sense of routine business letters, international news items, or articles in technical fields within his/her competence.	Can draft routine social correspondence and meet limited professional needs. Is familiar with the mechanics of the writing system, except in character systems where ability is limited to a small stock of high-frequency items. Makes frequent errors in spelling, style, and writing conventions. Able to write simple notes and draft routine social and limited office messages. Material normally requires editing by a more proficient writer.

APPENDIX IV

Language Skill Level Descriptions—Continued

3	Minimum Professional	Able to understand the essentials of all speech in a standard dialect including technical discussions within a special field. Has effective understanding of face-to-face speech, delivered with normal clarity and speed in a standard dialect, on general topics and areas of special interest; has broad enough vocabulary that he/she rarely has to ask for paraphrasing or explanation; can follow accurately the essentials of conversations between educated native speakers, reasonably clear telephone calls, radio broadcasts, and public addresses on nontechnical subjects; can understand without difficulty all forms of standard speech concerning a special professional field.	Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics. Can discuss particular interests and special fields of competence with reasonable ease; comprehension is quite complete for a normal rate of speech; vocabulary is broad enough that he rarely has to grope for a word; accent may be obviously foreign; control of grammar good; errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.	Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence, reports and technical material in his/her special field. Can grasp the essentials of articles of the above types without using a dictionary; for accurate understanding, moderately frequent use of a dictionary is required. Has occasional difficulty with unusually complex structures and low-frequency idioms.	Can draft official correspondence and reports in a special field. Control of structure, spelling, and vocabulary is adequate to convey his/her message accurately, but style may be quite foreign. All formal writing needs to be edited by an educated native.
4	Full Professional	Able to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to professional needs. Able to understand fully all speech in all standard dialects on any subject relevant to professional needs within the range of his/her experience, including social conversations; all intelligible broadcasts and telephone calls; and all kinds of technical discussions and discourse. Able to understand the essentials of speech in some nonstandard dialects.	Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Can understand and participate in any conversation within the range of his experience with a high degree of fluency and precision of vocabulary; would rarely be taken for a native speaker; but can respond appropriately even in unfamiliar situations; errors of pronunciation and grammar quite rare; can handle informal interpreting from and into the language.	Able to read all styles and forms of the language pertinent to professional needs. With occasional use of a dictionary can read moderately difficult prose readily in any area directed to the general reader, and all material in his/her special field, including official and professional documents and correspondence; can read reasonably legible handwriting without difficulty.	Can draft all levels of prose pertinent to professional needs. Control of structure, vocabulary, and spelling is broad and precise; sense of style is nearly native. Errors are rare and do not interfere with understanding. Nevertheless, drafts of official correspondence and documents need to be edited by an educated native.
5	Native/ Bilingual	Comprehension equivalent to that of the educated native speaker. Able to understand fully all forms and styles of speech intelligible to the educated native speaker, including a number of regional and illiterate dialects, highly colloquial speech, and conversations and discourse distorted by marked interference from other noise.	Speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker. Has complete fluency in the language such that his speech on all levels is fully accepted by educated native speakers in all of its features, including breadth of vocabulary and idiom, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references.	Reading proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native. Can read extremely difficult and abstract prose, as well as highly colloquial writings and the classic literary forms of the language. With varying degrees of difficulty can read all kinds of handwritten documents.	Has writing proficiency equal to that of an educated native. Can draft and edit both formal and informal correspondence, official reports and documents, and professional articles without nonnative errors of structure, spelling, style, or vocabulary. Achievement of this rating normally requires both secondary and high education in institutions where the language is the primary one used for instruction.

APPENDIX IV

Language Proficiency Code Key

Proficiency Level	C (Comprehension Level)	S (Speaking Level)	R (Reading Level)	W (Writing Level)
0	C-0—No Practical Proficiency	S-0—No Practical Proficiency	R-0—No Practical Proficiency	W-0—No Practical Proficiency
1	C-1 Elementary Prof: Understands most simple questions and statements on familiar topics when spoken to very slowly and distinctly. These often have to be restated in different terms before he understands.	S-1 Elementary Prof: Asks and answers questions on daily personal needs, within a limited vocabulary and with frequent errors in pronunciation and grammar.	R-1 Elementary Prof: Reads and understands elementary lesson material and common public signs.	W-1 Elementary Prof: Writes simple statements and questions using a very limited vocabulary with frequent errors in spelling and structure that frequently obscure meaning.
2	C-2 Limited Working Prof: Understands most conversation when spoken distinctly and at a slower than normal rate. Points have to be restated occasionally.	S-2 Limited Working Prof: Converses intelligibly but without thorough control of pronunciation and grammar within host social situations, about current events, his work, family, autobiographical information and non-technical subjects.	R-2 Limited Working Prof: Reads and understands intermediate lesson material or simple colloquial texts.	W-2 Limited Working Prof: Writes sentences on familiar topics using a technical vocabulary and basic structure pattern. Errors in spelling and structure occasionally obscure meaning.
3	C-3 Minimum Tech Prof: Understands general conversation or discussion within his special field, when the rate of speech is near normal.	S-3 Minimum Tech Prof: Participates effectively in all general conversation, discusses particular interests, and his special field, without making errors that obscure meaning.	R-3 Minimum Tech Prof: Reads and understands material on military and international subjects within his field. Reads and understands technical text material at junior high school level.	W-3 Minimum Tech Prof: Writes paragraphs on familiar topics using non-technical vocabulary and basic structural patterns. Errors seldom obscure meaning.
4	C-4 Full Tech Prof: Understands any conversation within the range of his experience when of normal conversational speed.	S-4 Full Tech Prof: Speaks the language fluently and accurately on all levels pertinent to military service needs without errors of pronunciation or grammar that interfere with ease of understanding.	R-4 Full Tech Prof: Reads high school level prose and material in his special field and military documents and correspondence.	W-4 Full Tech Prof: Writes prose with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to satisfy pertinent service requirements.
5	C-5 Native or Bilingual Proficiency: Comprehension proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.	S-5 Native or Bilingual Proficiency: Speaks with a proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.	R-5 Native or Bilingual Proficiency: Reads at a level of proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native.	W-5 Native or Bilingual Proficiency: Writes with a Proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.